

SOME RECENT COMMUNICATIONS RECEIVED THROUGH MISS CUMMINS

[Miss Gibbes (E.B.G.) has sent us the following account of veridical communications received during 1945 through Miss Geraldine Cummins, whose mediumship is well known to our members.]

Fictitious names of persons and places are used throughout, but the real names have been disclosed to the Hon. Editor.

Miss Cummins spent the greater part of the war years from 1939-1944 in Ireland looking after an invalid mother and doing other rather nerve-racking work. After the death of her mother in October 1944 she returned to London in February 1945. She did not seem very well but we had a few personal sittings for automatic writing before she returned to Ireland for the summer in June of that year.

During one of these sittings (March 19th, 1945) the following announcement was made by her control, Astor :

"I must tell you there is a stranger here, a quiet grey-haired woman with a curious force. So I have been compelled to pass on what is her message. She says she died in Kensington. She shows me a foot, that is her surname, I gather. Then a daisy, Yes, Marguerite Foote. She says she worked for a long time with an important public man—knew him well. She gives the name James. She says she wants to talk to Donald about James and that Donald hopes to come to this town in April. If so, she begs that you see him for the writing, not to let anything interfere as she has something important to say about James."

E.B.G. "I don't quite follow all this, Astor."

"You may know in April, as Donald is likely to want to see you if he has time."

E.B.G. "I grasp whom you mean now."

"That is all about her now. She doesn't seem able to give surnames. She seems to have been over here about three years. She says her message is important in regard to future events."

E.B.G. "Tell her I will remember and arrange."

The above came as a surprise. I soon realised however to whom the reference was meant. Later I looked up the name Foote in the telephone directory but could find no one in Kensington likely to fit the name given in the script.

After the sitting Miss Cummins said she recollected something about Donald X but couldn't remember what, and asked if any allusion had been made to him. I answered in the affirmative and enquired if he might be coming to London. She replied that she thought it extremely unlikely. I made no reference to the stranger.

During Miss Cummins's absence in Ireland, she had given an occasional sitting to a friend, Donald X. He had been much impressed by, and was very interested in, her psychic abilities. Through her he had received communications purporting to come from the mother of a well-known business man. Thinking there might be some interesting developments, I followed up this trail at the next sitting.

MARCH 25TH 1945, AT 25 JUBILEE PLACE, S.W. 3

"Astor is here ; Am I to call Hilda [my sister-in-law]? She and her family have been together to-day."

E.B.G. "Yes, but I should first like to ask you a few questions."

"I shall try to reply to them."

E.B.G. "You remember the quiet, grey-haired woman stranger, you described the other day?"

"Yes, she was an interesting woman with a keen brain, extremely quick but quiet, like one who had very great self-control and grip of herself."

E.B.G. "Had she spoken before?"

"No, she never communicated through my child [*i.e.* the medium]. In fact, it was her first visit. She knows Donald X. At least, she had seen him when she was staying with her employer whom she called James. When I asked her who James was, she replied that he was a man of affairs and did not seem to wish to give more information. I said was he in business and she replied that 'he was a very important business man' and smiled."

"I said what kind of goods did he deal in?" She said, "Every kind."

E.B.G. "I wanted to trace her."

"She seems to have had a confidential post with James."

E.B.G. "She said she died in Kensington. Is there nothing more you can tell me in this respect?"

"She said she died in Kensington and that Donald would know her and that she did not particularly wish that you should find out who she was."

E.B.G. "Well, we will leave it at that."

"That was her habit in life—to keep secrets, and so she was always reserved with strangers."

E.B.G. "I tried to trace her name in a book here, but of course could not do so, it was too vague, as she might have died in any house in Kensington."

"She did not say she died here. I asked her. She said, 'There is more than one Kensington in the world' and smiled."

At a subsequent sitting the following spontaneous reference to Marguerite Foote was made.

25, JUBILEE PLACE, CHELSEA, S.W. 3

SATURDAY AFTERNOON, APRIL 14TH, 1945

"Astor is here. There is near to you the quiet grey-haired lady, but if she is quiet she is persistent. She has for over a week been pressing me to speak to you about her first message. Her name is Marguerite Foote. At last I have that clearly from her. She says I gave her message wrongly to you. She had said James is coming over here in April and that she wanted to speak about James to Donald. She wanted to warn him that James was coming over. I see now that this lady does not belong to this country, but she is not French. She died in Kensington, New Zealand. She says she had retired there because she could not carry on her work any longer.

She says she knows Sheila took her place lately with James ; but it wasn't the same thing. Sheila is very clever but hasn't the experience of course. Do you want me to send this lady away?"

EBG. "I remembered, and would have asked Mr X to come here in April if he had visited this country. But now, as you say the message has been misinterpreted, we can convey it to him. We have not heard that he is coming here."

"She says she was working for a long time in a confidential position for James and that it has given her the greatest joy to see him resting after the passage of death. He is with his mother, or rather, she came to him."

EBG. "Tell her that I will send the message as she wishes."

"Yes, I have told her. She is satisfied."

After the death of James, Miss Cummins wrote a letter of sympathy to Mr X. She added something to the effect that, "A Miss Marguerite Foote had called here in March and that she was worried about something happening to a friend of his in April. She said she was from Kensington, N.Z." Miss Cummins added that she hesitated to write to Mr X as she knew nothing whatever about this lady. But she was a nice grey-haired woman. Also that she had called again yesterday.

A letter from Mr X was received by Miss Cummins on May 1st, 1945. It runs as follows :

(Extract)

April 24, 1945.

DUBLIN.

"DEAR MISS CUMMINS,

Thank you so much for your kind letter of sympathy. Millie and I are both grateful for it. What you wrote about Marguerite Foote is most interesting and evidential. You may have since learned that she was James's confidential secretary for many years and died about two years ago. What is most evidential is that she told you she lived in 'Kensington, N.Z.', which is not generally known ; also the fact that she had white hair, though relatively a young woman. How did that come through? If I could have excerpts from the script covering these two episodes, I should be most grateful. Obviously, Miss Foote was hoping to get word to James through you and me to take care of his health. . . . If you come over let us know. We not only want to see you but feel that some interesting things might come through. Please remember me to Miss Gibbes.

Yours faithfully,

DONALD X."

Copy of letter sent by Miss Gibbes to Mr X :

May 1st, 1945.

"DEAR MR X,

Miss Cummins has read me extracts from your letter to her concerning Marguerite Foote. As I am anxious to collect any evidence of survival, would you be so good as to let me know a few more details concerning her? I take a few questions from the three scripts copies of which I enclose. Your answers would of course be regarded by us as confidential.

Was Marguerite " quiet, grey-haired and with a curious force " ?

Did she " work for a long time with James and know him well " ?

In your letter you say she died about two years ago. Astor says about three years. But time is often a stumbling block in communications as you probably know, so this is near enough.

Would you describe M. Foote as " an interesting woman with a keen brain, extremely quick, quiet and self-controlled " etc. as described?

She claims she knows you, or at least had seen you when she was staying with her employer. Is this a fact?

" A confidential post " with James. Your letter confirms this.

Was she " reserved with strangers " and " persistent " ?

You affirm that she died in Kensington, N.Z. (A place, the existence of which was utterly unknown to Miss Cummins and myself).

Was she " unable to carry on her work any longer and so retired " ?

Is it a fact that a woman named Sheila took her place with James and was it just lately? Is Sheila not quite so efficient as M. F. as indicated? Is Sheila " clever but not so experienced " ?

The script indicates that she was working for a long time as Secretary. I note your letter states she was confidential secretary for many years.

In view of the fact that it was after the announcement of " James's " death that Astor wrote he had misinterpreted the original message concerning him, it is interesting to note a few points which would seem to indicate that this statement is correct.

1. " She wants to talk to Donald about James. . . . In April."
(Communication of March 19)

2. " not to let anything interfere as she had something important to say about James . . . you may know in April."

(March 19)

3. Her message " important in regard to future events ".

(March 19)

With reference to the suggestion in your letter that Miss Cummins may have learnt that M. F. was his confidential secretary and died two years ago, I can assure you that neither Miss Cummins nor I have seen anything of the kind. Had we done so, we should have thought immediately of this communicator. In any case it is indicated in script of March 25th that M. F. held " A confidential post " with James. Also in script of March 19 that she " worked for a long time with an important public man ".

Yours sincerely,

E. B. GIBBES."

Copy of letter received from Mr X :

May 10th, 1945.

(Personally typed)

" DEAR MISS GIBBES :

As I have written to Miss Cummins I shall be very happy to work with you on this matter and give such assistance as I can for I think you

have an evidential case of the first order. Answering your questions in the order in which you ask them I should say that :

1. Marguerite Foote could be described quite accurately as a woman with a "curious force". She was gray haired even while a young woman and white haired toward the end.

2. She did work for a long time with "James" and knew him extremely well.

3. I will verify the time of her death. It may have been more than two years.

4. She was the kind of woman that could make herself interesting to anyone who interested her and whom she considered worth while. She never could have attained the position she held without exceptional qualities.

5. She knows me well. She was in my friend's household from, I think it was 1922.

6. Yes, most confidential. I doubt if anything went over his desk that she did not know about.

7. She never talked about my friend's affairs or discussed any public business to my knowledge.

8. She died in a Wellington suburb. I believe it was Kensington. I will verify this as it is important.

9. Yes, she was unable to carry on for several years before she died.

10. Yes, it is a fact that a woman named Sheila took over and she was not so experienced but is clever.

I suggest that you try to obtain from Astor answers to the following questions which I shall be able to verify :

What illness overtook M. F.?

What was the name that she was known by in her employer's family? This would be very evidential.

What other name has Sheila? Describe colour of hair, married or single (I can verify such answers out of my own knowledge). Does Astor know of any kinsfolk of Sheila who have sent messages through him and Geraldine C. to me for others.

If M. F. comes again tell her I am very anxious to receive any message from "James" who believes in communication.

The dates and the misinterpretation of Astor's messages are most significant. . . .

I shall be glad to show you the scripts that G. C. obtained with me. They contain some extraordinary things.

Yours sincerely,

DONALD X."

Notes of sitting held on the morning of *May 16th*, 1945 at 25 Jubilee Place, S.W. 3.

"Astor comes."

EBG. "The last time we wrote you said that the lady with grey hair, the stranger, was around but we had no time then to talk with her. Would she like to come now?"

"Yes. I can call her. . . . Here she is. She is very interested in you and it is because she knows Donald X. She says that James is with his own people and that he was delighted too, to catch up on Walter R. whom, he said, had beaten him on the post in the journey to this world."

EBG. "Who is Walter R.? the rest of his name?"

"He said Walter and he were two sick men together and they had a private bet as to which of them would live the longest. James lost the bet. James thought he would go first. That is what this lady tells me. Walter R., that was the name."

EBG. "Has she any message she would like to send to Mr X?"

"She is delighted to hear you will give a message to Donald. Tell him she says, that James is not only happy but so darned glad to be able to think about himself. For the first time for many years he has been able to have a good think about himself."

EBG. "Does she remember if she was called by any special name in James's family?"

"She says she was known by more than one name."

(Here followed an attempt to write what looks like O or Q and Chap or Cheep.)

"I am trying to get her to write it." (Another attempt.)

EBG. "When she first came you gave her name correctly."

"She showed me a large daisy and a foot, that's how I got it originally. She may give it to Donald later."

EBG. "But he knows the nickname so it wouldn't be the same."

"She does not say anything more about that."

EBG. "I wonder if she can remember what other name Sheila had? and the colour of her hair and if married or single?"

"Wait. I will ask her. She says Sheila's name is Ship—no, it begins like Ship but it isn't a ship.

Shipton. That is the name she makes in signs to me.

Shipton. It may not be quite correct because the signs are difficult. But the special name they called her seemed to begin with the sign C."

EBG. "And was Sheila married?"

"She says Sheila was married, that she is a live wire and has a quick brain and is very attractive. Her husband, I think, is in the Army. Marguerite points to a uniform when she speaks of the husband who has some appointment."

EBG. "Astor, do you know any kinsfolk of Sheila's who have sent messages through you and the medium here, to Donald X.?"

(Some names were here given which were later verified by Mr Donald X as relevant.)

(EBG. "I wonder if she recollects what illness overtook her?"

"She does not know to which illness you refer. She was very ill at one time from anaemia, debility, but I can't hold her longer. . . ."

EBG. "Tell her I will ask for her again some time Astor. Your child is tired. . . . Goodbye."

(Note made after the sitting.)

Miss Cummins is not as strong as she used to be before the war and so the power does not, at present, last so long as formerly.

After the sitting I asked Miss Cummins if she knew who had been writing? She replied, giving the name of my relative, and then said she "saw a woman with grey, silvery hair—pale, at least her face seemed pale—and she looked puzzled or rather, she got the impression that she was puzzled, as though she didn't quite know what to make of me,"—"a little suspicious, that's all I got." Later she added "Didn't we have Marguerite back? (yes) that must have been she then."

Copy of Letter from Donald X, dated May 25 and received by Miss Gibbes June 1st 1945 :

"DEAR MISS GIBBES,

I was very much interested in your letter dated May 16th with enclosures. It only arrived two days ago. The last script is most extraordinary and convincing. I can tell you now that everything about Sheila is correct. (Mr X then verified the names above mentioned.) The success in getting the name Shipton through makes me suspect the possibility that M. F. didn't want to have her "pet name" come out. Possibly she tried to write "cheap" in protest though I see no reason for it. Perhaps later she will give it so that I won't tell you now.

The bit about Walter R. staggered me. See if you can get the nick name by which he was generally known to his intimates. The reference is most evidential. I won't give you the details yet but this was significant.

Give our best to G. [Miss Cummins]. I can quite understand that she is worn out. Her devotion to her mother during her long and trying illness was extraordinary and the shock of the ending.

If you get Marguerite again thank her for me and tell her I appreciate very much her news of James and that when there is a favourable opportunity I shall pass it on to those to whom it means a great deal.

This has developed into a most interesting and evidential research. Please keep me in touch with it and I will pass on any useful suggestions that occur to me.

Yours sincerely,

DONALD X."

Copy of letter sent to Mr X by E. B. G. :

"25, Jubilee Place,
Chelsea, S.W. 3.
May 21st, 1945.

DEAR MR X,

We had a short sitting today for a relative. Astor at once wrote as follows :

Astor is here. I have a word to say about a previous writing. There was little power near the end of it so I was not able to obtain all the answers clearly. You asked me to find out the Christian name the family knew and used for Miss Foote. I think that was the request. I got the name Alice from her in signs. So I presume that was the name required, Alice Foote. She made the signs that shaped this name I have written.

"The woman is the one who was here previously. She won't write herself but I can report what she says. She is still a little distrustful of you and afraid to give away any really personal information. She says that, in connection with James, they always had to be very careful in their statements, as there was the danger of the Press getting hold of it."

E.B.G. "Tell her she need not fear us in that respect."

"She says you can't trust anyone when it comes to careless talk."

E.B.G. "There I agree. Will you say that Mr X thanks Miss Foote for the message re James and when the opportunity occurs will pass it on to those to whom it means a great deal."

"She is very pleased indeed. . . ."

E.B.G. "Can Marguerite say anything more about Walter R.? He has a nick-name by which he was known to his intimates."

"Wait. . . . She only calls him Wat. I don't know if she means that as a nick-name. She says, 'Wat is right here and darned glad we are all together—the old trio.' I don't know what she means by the trio."

E.B.G. "Can she explain the trio?"

"'We are going to get together' she says, 'and start working after James has had his rest in the holiday camp.'"

E.B.G. "I conclude that Walter R. was associated with James in his job."

"'My dear Robson', James used to say." That is M.F.'s answer.

E.B.G. "Astor, you gave the name Alice as connected with M.F. could she explain why she gave this name?"

"She seems to think she told you that it was a name associated with herself."

E.B.G. "It was not what Mr X expected to be given."

"She says, 'The name is my property—at least—it was my first name so why should you object to my using it?'"

E.B.G. "Well, she is cautious and we are also. Mr X wants to be sure of her, so we are all cautious!"

"She says she may have given away too much to you two. She is a little upset now because I have told you what she said about . . ."

E.B.G. "Please tell her we won't give anything away. She hasn't given, I think, the name which James's family used when speaking of her."

"I have said that to her but she won't give it, in fact, she won't tell me anything more now."

E.B.G. "Well, tell her that I only asked her because Mr X wanted to know and your child here is going over to Ireland very soon."

"She won't, I think, trust you with any further information. I led her on to talk and now she is distressed at realising some of her remarks are written down and are in the hands of two strangers."

E.B.G. "Tell her it is all right. We often have confidential things written down and she need not be upset."

"Yes, I shall tell her, it is only a passing mood with her. I think the man who was with her told her that she was indiscreet in communicating with strangers on earth through an interpreter. It is the fault of this man. She was quite ready to talk until he spoke to her about you. He was also connected with James—worked for him in a confidential capacity."

(EBG. Thank you. I think the request was for the name by which she was known in James's family).

The name of my relative was then announced. And the writing proceeded on other lines.

I hope the above has some meaning to you. Recently we had another communication of a very evidential nature concerning a woman of the name, Alice.¹ I hope there is no confusion.

As it happens, I have not shown G. the last script. I told her bits of it but I carefully concealed the fact that there was any suggestion of a request for a name. Nor did I tell her that I had sent you the page on which the names were written. She is quite unaware that she had written any.

With kind regards,

Yours sincerely,

E.B.G."

Copy of letter from Mr X received by EBG. Dated May 30th 1945 :

"DEAR MISS GIBBES,

Thanks for your letter of May 21st. I do not know whether "Alice" was one of the names of Marguerite Foote or not. Probably it was not but I will enquire. Alice is *not* the name I was hoping to get. How would it be, when opportunity presents itself, to ask whether Marguerite Foote wished *not* to tell the name James called her by and which James's family used in speaking to and of her.

G.C. and Astor are so marvellous in giving names that I suspect that there is a holding back on M.F.'s part. . . .

I am waiting with interest to see what you get on the subject of Walter R. This is one of the most extraordinary bits of evidence that I have ever come across.

With all best wishes,

Yours sincerely,

DONALD X."

Notes of Sitting, Wed. eve : June 6th 1945, at 25 Jubilee Place, S.W. 3.
6.17 p.m.

(GC and EBG)

Having received Mr X's letter in which he said the name Alice was incorrect so far as he knew, anyhow it was not what he wanted, and as G. is returning to Ireland soon, I thought it advisable to endeavour to get replies to his letters as soon as possible.

"Astor is here. You wish to talk to Hilda or to others."

E.B.G. "Who is there besides Hilda?"

"There is your brother Frank and I think there is a woman in a mist and also I see two others not quite clear to me yet."

E.B.G. "Will you ask the woman in the mist to come and talk to me first?"

¹ This case was printed in *Journal* May 1945

E.B.G. "Tell her to trust us, and now what about the other two you said were near?"

"Yes, this person has given her name as Pussy. She has a connection with M.F. They spoke to each other. Pussy has the symbol of fire near her now I see. I think she died through a fire. Wait I will ask her more. She would like Millie to know that she is more alive than she ever was on earth. Pussy has been over here a number of years it seems. She has gone now. She talked so quickly I don't know if I gave her message correctly. I think I picked it up, at any rate, something she wanted to be sent. . . ."

Copy of letter sent by E.B.G. to Mr X. :

"25, Jubilee Place, S.W. 3.

June 6th 1945

DEAR MR X,

Many thanks for yours of May 25th and 30th returning page of names belonging to the script. You say the name Shipton is correct. But to whom does it belong?

I am very interested in what you say about Walter R. In view of the fact that G. returns to Ireland in a few days, I decided that I would try to get in touch with M. Foote again so as to obtain if possible answers to your questions and thus eliminate the influence of the sitter's mind. For you will be seeing G. in Dublin shortly. Herewith is the result. From it, do I gather that Walter R.'s name is Robson or is that the nick-name? And that he was also at one time a secretary or confidential friend? You will see that M. Foote says Alice was her first name. *Can you verify this—Also if she died in Kensington, N.Z.,—if there is such a place?*

I shall be glad to hear if the name Pussy conveys anything to your wife? Geraldine told me her name was Millie in course of conversation a short time ago. Would you also let me know if the reference to fire is correct? Also, if she has been over a number of years? And also if she talked very quickly when on earth? This is a small point but may have been a characteristic of the alleged communicator.

In yours of May 25th you say "Everything about Sheila is correct." Am I to take it she is a "live wire" and has a quick brain and that her husband is in the Army and has some appointment?

I asked G. later on, as she said she thought M. F. had been speaking, if she had ever had a Walter R. writing through her to you? She replied in the negative so far as she could recollect. She was very anxious to hear if anything of interest had been communicated at enclosed sitting. But beyond saying that it was very interesting I thought, I told her nothing as I didn't want to spoil anything else that might come through her to you by her previous knowledge of what had been said, etc.

I shall be very intrigued to hear what you think of the enclosed. But it is unlikely that we have any more sittings before she goes, as she seems very tired and her "power" does not, alas, last as long as it used. I have assured her that you are delighted with the results of this experiment and that encouraged her. Please forgive typing errors, etc.

With kind regards,

Yours sincerely,

E. B. G."

Copy of letter from Mr X dated Sunday, June 17th 1945 :

"DEAR MISS GIBBES,

I have been long delayed in answering your last very interesting letter with script enclosed. This is, your letter of June 6th.

Shipton is Sheila's married name. She is James's daughter.

Walter R. is Walter Robson. For many years he was James's close friend. He died on board ship when on a voyage with James. James always called him by a nickname as did all his circle. This I will not tell you yet. The trio might well mean Robson, James and Miss Foote. They worked very closely for years. To me this is very evidential. I shall find out whether Marguerite Foote's first name was Alice. I did not know it.

"Pussy" is my wife's sister, that is correct. My wife is Millie. She, Pussy, was burned to death in her house. There are some details that might come through which would be evidential so I shall not say more at present except that she was a very vivacious personality. . . . We expect to see G.C. on the 20th and if she is up to it, I would like to have a short sitting, not over 15 minutes, as she should not get tired. But if this comes off, it might be well not to ask any questions regarding the things that have been coming to you. If anything comes, well and good. But since I know the answers to several questions, I think it is best to wait until you might take it up again. We have got hold of something very good and should be patient. Don't you think so?

Yours sincerely,

DONALD X."

From enquiries made by Mr X it was ascertained (1) that Marguerite Foote's middle name began with A, but it was not ascertained that it was Alice ; (2) that she was treated at a hospital known as Kensington Hospital, but died not at Kensington, N.Z., but in a neighbouring district ; (3) that James and Robson both knew they were ill when on the voyage mentioned, but that nothing could be ascertained about any bet between them.

Further investigations in this case were ended after June 20th, 1945, owing to the severe operation and subsequent long convalescence of Miss Cummins.

Several points of interest would seem to emerge from a study of this case. One of the most important is that facts have been given in the automatic script which were not only unknown to Miss Cummins and myself, but also unknown to Mr X. The latter is the only individual who could reasonably be regarded as being in possible telepathic communication with the automatist while writing these facts. But this hypothesis does not cover the statement apparently indicating James's death, over three weeks before it occurred.

So far as we know, we had never heard of Walter Robson. It is of interest to note that the characters of both Marguerite Foote and Sheila Shipton are accurately described. As these two women were entire strangers to us, it appears that these descriptions could only have been given by someone who knew them both.—"Astor" describing Marguerite and the latter describing Sheila.

It is of interest to note that Astor appears to have acted as reporter of Marguerite's remarks at these sittings. If this is accepted as the manner in which the communication was conducted, it may explain the discrepancy between fact and statement when Marguerite is alleged to have said she died at Kensington, whereas she was in hospital in Kensington and died at another place not far off.

Perhaps readers will agree that this case is the more interesting because of the illustration in this case, of a very human failing—inaccurate reporting.

When analysing evidence one should always compare it with the behaviour of human beings. So often the sceptical investigator appears to assume that the hypothetical communicator must be infallible. If he is fallible, that is to say, makes inaccurate statements, then the communicator is considered by sceptics to be an invention of the medium's subconscious mind. If he is infallible and makes accurate statements, it is often assumed that the subconscious mind of the medium is wholly responsible for the alleged communication. Cryptaesthesia or invention accounts for all the phenomena, the communicator is never there!

E. B. GIBBES.

MASS EXPERIMENTS IN THE PSI COGNITION OF DRAWINGS

By D. J. WEST

Acknowledgment

The experimenter wishes to place on record his great indebtedness to Mr M. T. Hindson, who willingly undertook the laborious task of scoring all the drawings, and gave unstinted practical help throughout the experiments. Mr Hindson is already known to members of the Society for his work in judging drawings in Mr Carington's experiments.

Introduction

Those who have followed or been engaged upon experiments in psi cognition are more or less generally agreed (at least on this side of the Atlantic) that the ability to divine by telepathy or clairvoyance the order of a randomly arranged pack of cards is a rare one. It seemed, when the card-guessing campaign was first launched by Ina Jephson, that statistics might reveal a latent faculty in most people. Later work in conjunction with Besterman and Soal showed that when adequate precautions were taken no results were obtained in tests on groups of unselected percipients. Dr Soal's Herculean labours over many years, as well as many sporadic unpublished trials, confirm the impression that good card-guessers are a rarity. In earlier days the Americans made the claim that about one person in five was a successful card-guesser; but, judging by recent comments in the Editorials of the *Journal of Parapsychology*, their present view is much more conservative.